

Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 12 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council (WSWC) and the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water issues.



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WestFAST News

July 2013

New Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency

On July 18, the Senate confirmed Gina McCarthy as the next Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by a vote of 59-40. Prior to her confirmation, Ms. McCarthy served as EPA's Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation, where she played a key role in the Administration's efforts to address climate change. She will succeed former Administrator Lisa Jackson, who resigned in February.

Please see this [link](#) for more information.

Department of Energy Releases a New Report on Climate Vulnerabilities

On July 11, the Department of Energy (DOE) released a report that assesses the vulnerability of the nation's energy and electrical power infrastructure to climate change and extreme weather. The report is intended to support the Administration's national climate change adaptation planning efforts and to advance DOE's goal of promoting energy security. It also identifies activities underway to address vulnerabilities, as well as potential opportunities to make the energy sector more resilient. The report was prepared by the Department of Energy's Office of Policy and International Affairs (DOE-PI) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). Craig Zamuda of DOE-PI served both as the coordinating lead author and as a principal author.

Among other things, the report finds that: (1) decreased water availability for cooling and higher ambient air and water temperatures can increase the risk of shutdowns at thermo-electric power plants; (2) reduced hydroelectric generation may occur in some regions and seasons due to drought and declining snowpack; (3) sea level rise, higher storm surges, flooding, and other factors may pose risks to energy infrastructure on the coasts; and (4) more frequent drought and flooding affect water levels in rivers and ports, which may increase the risks of disruption and delay to fuel transportation.

Please see this [link](#) for more information.

See also the [interactive map](#).

WSWC Workshop: Measuring, Quantifying, and Reporting Drought Impacts

On August 5-7, at the Doubletree Downtown in San Diego, California, the WSWC and the California Department of Water Resources will co-sponsor a workshop on quantifying drought impacts. The purpose of the workshop is to develop a strategy for building a centralized drought information source, by bringing together state, local, and federal agencies to discuss ways to improve methods for quantifying drought impacts and to make drought information more widely available.

A number of federal speakers are scheduled to participate, including officials from the Department of Agriculture, the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Energy, NOAA, NASA, and others. Also, various state speakers will participate, including WSWC members Jeanine Jones of California, J.D. Strong of Oklahoma, and Tracy Streeter of Kansas.

Please see this [link](#) for more information.

News Links

Federal News

07/01: NOAA Responds to Americans' Call for Shorter-term Drought Forecasts; see [link](#).

07/01: Latest NRCS Science and Technology Helps Agriculture Mitigate Climate Change; see [link](#).

07/01: EPA and Commerce Link U.S. Analysis and Companies in Environmental Solutions Toolkit; see [link](#).

07/02: USDA and DOI Highlight Successes of Protecting Bird Habitat on Private Lands; see [link](#).

07/02: U.S. Drought Monitor Update for July 2, 2013; see [link](#).

07/03: Changes in Rio Grande Flows; see [link](#).

07/03: Drought intensifies in the West on July 2 U.S. Drought Monitor Map; see [link](#).

07/10: This Month in Climate History: Earth's Hottest Temperature; see [link](#).

07/10: Agriculture, Interior and Defense Departments Partner to Benefit Agricultural Lands, Wildlife Habitat and Military Readiness; see [link](#).

07/10: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Boosts State Endangered Species Conservation Efforts with \$32 Million in Grants; see [link](#).

07/11: Department of Energy Releases New Report on Energy Sector Vulnerabilities; see [link](#).

07/11: Health of U.S. Streams Reduced by Streamflow Modifications and Contaminants; see [link](#).

07/14: Worsening Drought Impacts Western Rangeland on Public Lands; see [link](#).

07/16: Bureau of Land Management and NACD Renew Their Partnership; see [link](#).

07/17: Navigate America's Major Rivers Without Getting Wet; see [link](#).

07/17: Connectivity Best for Created Wetlands; see [link](#).

07/19: USDA and Interior Announce Partnership to Protect America's Water Supply from Increased Wildfire Risk; see [link](#).

07/22: Service Report: Nation's Rivers Flow toward Better Habitat, Economies and Public Safety; see [link](#).

07/23: San Antonio Agrees to \$1.1 Billion Upgrade Sewer Systems to Comply With Clean Water Act; see [link](#).

07/25: Hotter, Drier Climate Leads to More Tree Deaths from Fire; see [link](#).

07/26: Plan Proposes Collaborative Path Forward for Reduced Emissions, Continued Power Generation, and Clean Energy Development; see [link](#).

07/29: NOAA's National Weather Service More Than Doubles Computing Capacity; see [link](#).

State News

07/01: Utah's Water Future - An Invitation for Public Comment; see [link](#).

07/02: Western Governors Roll Out '10-Year Energy Vision,' A Regional Consensus on Energy Policy; see [link](#).

07/02: Western Governors Elect Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper Chairman, Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval Vice Chairman at 2013 Annual Meeting; see [link](#).

07/03: Federal Government Declares Drought Disaster for 38 Colorado Counties; see [link](#).

07/08: Western Governors' Tackle Big Issues Such as Energy, Public Lands and Healthcare at Annual Meeting; see [link](#).

07/16: Western Governors Pass Resolutions on Endangered Species Act, Energy and Transmission, Wildland Fire Management and Other Issues; see [link](#).

07/17: Dalrymple Requests USDA Compile Statewide Assessment of Crop Damages; see [link](#).

07/18: Western Governors Support Reauthorization of Federal Lands Transfer Facilitation Act; see [link](#).

07/18: Private Sector Can Be an Integral Part of Improved Federal Forest Management; see [link](#).

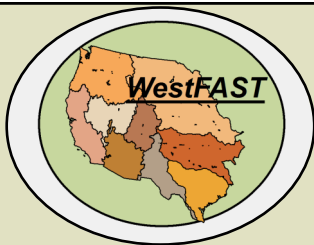
07/19: Gov. Hickenlooper Announces \$14.7 million in Grants for Rural, Urban Wastewater System Improvements; see [link](#).

07/24: Bullock Announces Grant to Replace 100 Year-Old Wastewater Pipes in Cascade; see [link](#).

07/24: Western Governors Support Legislation on Federal Lands, Quagga Mussels, Drought; see [link](#).

Upcoming WSWC Meetings & Events

- **August 5-7, 2013:** [WSWC and CDWR Workshop on Quantifying Drought Impacts](#); San Diego, California; Doubletree Downtown.
- **August 13-15, 2013:** [Indian Water Rights Settlement Symposium](#); Santa Fe, New Mexico; Hilton Santa Fe at Buffalo Thunder.
- **October 2-4, 2013:** Fall Council Meeting; Deadwood, South Dakota; The Lodge at Deadwood.



WestFAST News is published monthly. To get an Agency Announcement published or to get added to the WestFAST News distribution list contact:

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